



Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools
Cumann na Scoileanna Pobail agus Cuimsitheacha

- Guidelines on the
Role of Trustees/Patrons
in Community Schools

*your school,
your community*



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Guidelines on the **Role of Trustees/Patrons** in Community Schools

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Introduction

The Education Act 1998 sets out a framework within which the various stakeholders in the education system are expected to operate. The duties and responsibilities of patrons and management are identified in this context while subsequent relevant legislation applies also.

In 2002 the ACCS Executive set up a Trustees: Accountability and Responsibility sub-committee to consider the responsibilities of trustees and the interface between trustees and boards of management. The deliberations of this sub-committee are published as a set of guidelines that will generate a greater awareness among trustees and boards of management in community schools of their respective functions and responsibilities under the existing Deed of Trust and education legislation.

The guidelines are presented in a format that is designed to assist trustees/patrons and boards of management identify their relevant roles and responsibilities.

In 2021 the ACCS Executive agreed to update the guidelines to incorporate significant changes in legislation since 2004 and to take cognisance of changes which have taken place in the structures and governance of the associated organisations.

Community Schools

Originally these schools represented a coming together of the two traditions in post-primary education - the voluntary secondary and the VECs. The schools are owned by the Minister for Education, who vests the ownership in trustees/patrons. These schools are multid denominational in ethos or characteristic spirit.

In the case of community schools, the joint patrons (trustees/patrons) are as follows:

- the local Education and Training Board and a Religious Order(s), and/or the Bishop
- the local Education and Training Board and Educate Together

The composition of boards of management in community schools reflects the principle of partnership in the 1998 Act and the Deeds of Trust. The composition of community school boards is as follows:

- 3 nominees of the Religious Authorities or Educate Together
- 3 nominees of the Local Education and Training Board
- 2 parents of children who are pupils in the school which is established and who are resident in the area
- 2 teachers employed in the schools forming the new community school or who are employed in the existing community school
- The principal acts as a non-voting member of the board

The terms trustee and patron are interchangeable in this document.

“The patron of a school shall carry out the functions and powers conferred on the patron by this Act and any such functions and powers as may be conferred on the patron by any Act of the Oireachtas or instrument made thereunder”. Education Act 1998

The distinction between patron and trustee:

1. The Education Act 1998 (“the 1998 Act”) provide as follows in section 8:

8. (1) (a) *The person who, at the commencement of this section, is recognised by the Minister as the patron of a primary school, and*
(b) **the persons who, at the commencement of this section, stand appointed as trustees or as the board of governors of a post-primary school and, where there are no such trustees or such board, the owner of that school, shall be deemed to be the patron for the purposes of this Act** and the Minister shall enter his, her or their name, as appropriate, in a register kept for that purpose by the Minister. *(emphasis added)*¹

The 1998 Act recognises that whoever stands as trustees of community schools are the patrons of the schools. While The Act describes duties and functions of the patrons and not duties of trustees (see below) from the standpoint of the Deed of Trust, the concept of trusteeship is pre-eminent.

1. Section 8(2) provide: In any case other than that provided in subsection (1), the patron of a recognised school shall be the person who requested recognition of the school, or a nominee of such person and the name of that person shall be entered in the register.

Who are the Trustees/Patrons?

The Education Act 1998 states that:

Where two or more persons exercise the functions of a patron they may be registered as joint patrons. [Education Act 1998, Part II, Section 8 (5)]

Community schools have more than one trustee/patron and as such have several parties recognised or deemed to be patrons. Therefore, by definition, the concept of joint patronage is operating across the community school sector.

Implication: *This means that joint patrons/trustees must exercise their functions jointly and must decide the practical and operational implications of how they will arrange this partnership.*

In the case of community schools, the joint trustees/patrons are the Education and Training Board, the Religious Order(s), and/or the Bishop [Deed of Trust, Community School], or Educate Together, or the duly authorised nominated person(s) deemed to be acting on behalf of the trustees/patrons.

The Education Act 1998 confirms that those who stand appointed as trustees:

shall be deemed to be the patron for the purposes of the Act and the Minister shall enter his, her or their name, as appropriate in a register kept for that purpose by the Minister.

[Education Act 1998, Part II, Section 8 (1) (b)]

The Education Act 1998 imposes a dual obligation on the trustees/patrons where it states:

The patron of a school shall carry out the functions and exercise the powers conferred on the patron by this Act and such other functions and powers as may be conferred on the patron by any Act of the Oireachtas or instrument made thereunder, deed, charter, articles of management or other such instrument relating to the company or operation of the school.

[Education Act 1998, Part II, Section 8(6)]

Education Act 1998

The context in which schools operate is outlined in the Introduction to the Education Act 1998.

The Education Act 1998 was enacted to make provision in the interests of the common good for the education of every person in the state, including any person with a disability or who has other special educational needs, and to provide generally for primary, post-primary, adult and continuing education and vocational education and training; to ensure that the education system is accountable to students, their parents and the state for the education provided, respects the diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions in Irish society and is conducted in a spirit of partnership between schools, patrons, students, parents, teachers and other school staff, the community served by the school and the state; to provide for the recognition and funding of schools and their management through boards of management; to provide for an inspectorate for schools; to provide for the role and responsibilities of principals and teachers; to establish the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and to make provision for it, and to provide for related matters. [Education Act 1998, Introduction, page 5]

The Education Act 1998 recognises the Deed of Trust as an instrument of governance and also clarifies matters over and above the general terms of the Deed of Trust.

In the carrying out of his/her functions, the Minister shall have regard to the practices and traditions relating to the organisation of schools or groups of schools existing at the commencement of this Part and the right of schools to manage their own affairs in accordance with this Act and any charters, deeds, articles of management or other such instruments relating to their establishment or operation. [Education Act 1998, Part I, Section 7 (4)(a)(iv)]

Sections 11(1) and 11(2) of the Act regarding withdrawal of recognition of a school by the Minister should be read in conjunction with the terms of the Model Lease for a community school.

Deed of Trust in a Community School

The Deed of Trust and schedules therein set out certain official responsibilities for trustees:

The trustees hereby covenant with the Minister that they will, from time to time and at all times, hereafter duly, diligently and faithfully to execute and perform all the Trusts herein referred to and all the terms and conditions mentioned and contained herein and in the Scheme. The scheme is defined as the provisions set out in the first and second schedules, namely, the Instrument and Articles of Management. These provisions underpin Trustees' responsibilities and rights relative to a particular Community School under the terms of the Deed.

[Article 6, Model Lease, Deed of Trust for Community Schools]

Having established the legal context within which trustees exercise their role this document now addresses significant practical requirements of trustees and boards of management. The guidelines are not intended to be prescriptive but to provide an AJP perspective on the action required to enable both bodies to fulfil their mutual responsibilities.

The Establishment of a School

Section 8(6) of the 1998 Education Act states:

The patron of a school shall carry out the functions and exercise the powers conferred on the patron by this Act and such other functions and powers as may be conferred on the patron by any Act of the Oireachtas or instrument made thereunder, deed, charter, articles of management or other such instrument relating to the establishment or operation of the school.

[Education Act 1998, Part II, Section 8 (6)]

This section makes it clear that there are two fundamental documents that govern the role of the trustees/patrons: The Deed of Trust and the 1998 Act.

The Board of Management

1. Under the Act, the patron's responsibility is to appoint the board of management.

The over-arching duty of a board of management emanates from the Education Act 1998 where it states that:

It shall be the duty of a board to manage the school on behalf of the patron for the benefit of the students and their parents. [Education Act 1998, Part IV, Section 15(1)]

The Education Act stipulates that:

It shall be the duty of a patron, for the purposes of ensuring that a recognised school is managed in the spirit of partnership, to appoint where practicable a board of management the composition of which shall have been agreed between patrons of schools, national associations of parents, recognised school management organisations, recognised trade unions and staff associations representing teachers and the Minister.

[Education Act 1998, Part IV, Section 14(1)]

The Act also states that when making appointments to a board established in accordance with subsection (1):

The patron shall comply with directions given by the Minister in respect of the appropriate gender balance and the Minister, before giving any such directions, shall consult with patrons, national associations of parents, recognised school management organisations and recognised trade unions and staff associations representing teachers.

[Education Act 1998, Part IV, Section 14 (5)]

While the Deed of Trust is silent on the appointing authority, apart from stipulating that the trustees call the first meeting of the board of management, the responsibility for appointing each successive board of management now rests with the trustees/patrons of the community school in common with the patrons of all other schools.

Implications: *The trustees/patrons have the responsibility and the authority to appoint the board of management under legislation. The trustees/patrons have ultimate responsibility for ensuring the nomination of their own trustee/patron nominees, while facilitating the election of parent and teacher nominees to the board of management, as appropriate. Nominating bodies are obliged to communicate the names of their new nominees to the trustees/patrons for formal appointment to the boards of management.*

Appointment of board of management by trustees/patrons & nomination to selection committees – See Appendix 1 Template letter(s)

2. The patrons may remove/replace a nominated member from the board and have the right to dissolve the board of management if necessary.

Article 6 (b) of the Instrument of Management of the Deed of Trust states that:

Any member of the board may be removed from office by his/her nominator.

The Education Act stipulates that:

Subject to this section and to the consent of the Minister, the patron may:

(a) for good and valid reasons stated in writing to a member of a board of management remove that member from that office, or

(b) if satisfied that the functions of a board are not being effectively discharged, dissolve that board. [Education Act 1998, Part IV, Section 16 (1)]

The Education Act outlines procedures necessary for the dissolution of a board and/or the removal of a board member from the board of management. [Education Act 1998, Part IV, Section 16 (5-7)]

In the same section the Act allows the patron to appoint a person or persons to manage the school following the dissolution of the board of management. The patron is expected to appoint a new board of management not later than six months following the dissolution unless a longer period has been approved by the Minister.

Implication: *Trustees/patrons must operate strictly within the timescale as defined above.*

3. School Site and Property

In relation to the school property the Education Act states that:

For the avoidance of doubt, nothing in this Act shall confer or be deemed to confer on the board any right over or interest in the land and buildings of the school for which the board is responsible. [Education Act 1998, Part IV, Section 15(3)]

Implication: *The board of management does not acquire any right or interest in the school land or buildings even though the board is responsible for them. This is linked to sections 2 and 14 of the Model Lease, Deed of Trust for a Community School. Any question of transferring or disposing of a part of the school site or building to or acquiring any additional property from any other party is outside the remit of the board of management and must be referred to the trustees/patrons who will communicate on the matter with the Minister and the DE as the landowner.*

The Deed of Trust stipulates:

The Deed of Trust and schedules therein set out certain official responsibilities for trustees/patrons. Trustees/patrons have a specific role in relation to the property.

“The Trustees hold the Trust property upon trust for the purposes of the School.” (Article 4).

Permission to make changes to site and building(s) – See Appendix 2 Template Letter(s)

Characteristic Spirit of a Community School

Section 15 of the 1998 Act sets out the duties of boards of management:

It shall be the duty of a board to manage the school on behalf of the patron and for the benefit of the students and their parents and to provide or cause to be provided an appropriate education for each student at the school for which that board has responsibility.

In describing the function of a school, the Education Act emphasises the promotion of the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students and the provision of health education for them, in consultation with their parents, having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school. Likewise, in describing how a board of management shall perform the functions conferred on it, the Act states that in carrying out its functions the board shall:

Uphold, and be accountable to the patron for so upholding the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school, and at all times act in accordance with any Act of the Oireachtas or instrument made there under deed, charter, articles of management or other such instrument relating to the establishment or operation of the school, [Education Act 1998, Part IV, Section 15(2) (b)]

Implication: *The trustees of any Community School must agree the characteristic spirit of the school. In so agreeing, trustees/patrons need to take cognisance of the school's inherited tradition and values and the founding intention of the school.*

In this, we note that the joint trustees/patrons can hold the board accountable for upholding the characteristic spirit of the the school.

Characteristic Spirit of a Community School under the joint patronage of Catholic and ETB patrons – See Appendix 3

Agreed Statement for Educate Together and ETB schools – See Appendix 3A

Policies and Communication: Role of Trustees/Patrons and Board of Management

4. The Liaison Trustees/Patrons' Role

To assist trustees/patrons and boards of management in meeting their mutual obligations under the relevant sections of the Education Act and the Deed of Trust, effective systems of communication need to be established. The Education Act is unequivocal in stating that it is one of the functions of the board to *consult with and keep the patron informed of decisions and proposals of the board*. [Education Act 1998, Part IV, Section 15(2) (c)]

This is reiterated in the Department of Education Governance Manual, 2016:

It is the duty of the board to manage the school on behalf of the patrons. In carrying out this duty the board is obliged to consult with and keep the patrons informed of decisions and proposals of the board. It is essential, therefore that arrangements are in place to ensure that the patron is appropriately consulted in relation to board matters and that any information required for the patron's role is made available to the patron by the board.

(The Governance Manual Section 2.12)

Implication: *To enable the joint trustees/patrons to exercise their responsibilities vis-a-vis a particular Community School the trustees, acting jointly, should arrange an annual meeting early in the school year. At this meeting trustees/patrons should nominate a Trustee/Patron who will act as a liaison Trustee/Patron in all communications between the board of management and the trustees/patrons.*

The role should be rotated between the joint trustee/patrons nominees with the joint trustee/patrons' agreement.

Communications include:

- *Nominees to the BOM*
- *Agreed Minutes of Board Meetings*
- *Requests for Site and Building Developments*
- *Changes to the Admissions Policy*
- *Requests for Nominations to Selection Committees*
- *Child Protection Matters pertinent to the Patrons*
- *Annual Certified Accounts*

The School Plan

The Education Act emphasises that the school plan shall be prepared in consultation with trustees/patrons and others.

The school plan shall be prepared in accordance with such directions, including directions relating to consultation with the parents, the patron, staff and students of the school, as may be given from time to time by the Minister in relation to school plans.

[Education Act 1998, Part IV, Section 21(3)]

Likewise, Section 21(4), Part IV, Education Act 1998, requires the board of management to send a copy of the plan to the patron.

Template School Plan/End of Year Report - See Appendix 4

5. The Formulation of School Policies

There are a number of significant references throughout the Education Act which have implications for trustees/patrons regarding policies adopted by the board of management.

a. Child Protection:

Children First National Guidance 2017 outlines the new statutory obligations that apply to mandated persons such as registered teachers and the new statutory obligations that apply to organisations such as schools under the Act. It also sets out the best practice (non - statutory) obligations which are in place for all individuals (including teachers) and for all sectors of society. The statutory obligations under the Children First Act, 2015 operate side by side with the best practice (non-statutory) obligations.

9.10 Role of the Patron

9.10.1

In accordance with section 14 of the Education Act, 1998, the board of management manages the school on behalf of the patron. Section 14 of the Act requires that the board of management must consult with and keep the patron informed of decisions and proposals of the board. This requirement applies to the range of decisions and proposals of the board including any relating to child protection.

9.10.2

These procedures require that the patron be provided with a copy of the Child Safeguarding Statement and the notification regarding the annual review of the Child Safeguarding Statement.

9.10.3

Records of the annual review of the Child Safeguarding Statement and its outcome shall be made available, if requested, to the patron.

9.10.4

Where an allegation or suspicion of child abuse or neglect regarding a member of the board of management has been reported by the DLP (or employer) to Tusla, the board of management shall inform the patron that a report involving a board member has been submitted to Tusla.

It is a matter for the patron to determine if any action is necessary regarding the member's continued role on the board of management, including whether the patron shall exercise his or her powers under section 16 of the Education Act 1998.

9.10.5

The patron must also be informed where the board of management has not complied with the procedures set out in section 7.3.6 and has not reported an allegation of abuse against an employee to Tusla where advised by Tusla to do so.

Child Protection Procedures for Post Primary Schools 2017

For full details see DE documentation:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/d7be05-child-protection/>

Implication: *In a Community School with joint trustees/patrons, the board must notify and/or inform the joint trustees/patrons of any child protection concerns relevant to the trustees/patrons.*

b. The Admissions Policy

Under the provisions of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, all schools are required to have drafted admissions policies in line with the provisions of the act. These policies have been approved by the patron, following consultation with staff and parents of children who are attending the school. The Act states:

62(1) The board of the school shall, following consultation with the patron, parents of students attending the school, the staff of the school, and such other persons as the Minister may determine, prepare a draft admission policy in respect of the school.

62(3) The board shall submit the draft admission policy prepared under subsection (1) to the patron for approval.

[Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018]

c. The Code of Behaviour: the policy of the school relating to the expulsion and suspension of students

A code of behaviour shall be prepared in accordance with such guidelines as may, following consultation by the board with national associations of parents, recognised school management organisations and trade unions and staff associations representing teachers, be issued by the board. Education (Welfare) Act 2000, section 23(3)

Under section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the board of management of each school must prepare and make available a code of behaviour for its students. The Act requires that the school code of behaviour is prepared in accordance with Guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB). The Guidelines have their basis in law.

Under the provisions of the Education Act 1998, each school has a patron who carries out certain functions specified in the Act. The board of management manages the school on behalf of the patron and for the benefit of the students and their parents. The board must:

- uphold the characteristic spirit of the school and be accountable to the patron in this respect
- consult with and keep the patron informed of decisions and proposals
- publish its policies on admissions, participation, suspension and expulsion in a manner that has been agreed with the patron (section 15(d), Education Act 1998)

Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998 provide for an appeal where a board of management, expels or suspends a student for a period or periods totaling not less than 20 days in a school year. *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools, NEWB 2008*

d. Antibullying Procedures and Policy

All boards of management must formally adopt and implement an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of these procedures. **A copy of the school's anti-bullying policy must be provided to the Department of Education and Skills (hereinafter referred to as 'the Department') and the patron if requested.**

As part of the oversight arrangements, the board of management must undertake an annual review of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation by the school. **A record of the review and its outcome must be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.**

CI 045/2013: Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools

e. SEN Policy

In preparing a special needs policy a school is expected to:

Ensure that the educational needs of all students, including those with a disability or other special educational needs are identified and provided for.

[Education Act 1998, Part II, Section 9 (a)]

While the above section requires the school to identify and provide for special educational needs the obligation to make resources available for this provision rests with the Minister. The Act states that it shall be the function of the Minister:

to ensure, subject to the provision of this Act, that there is made available to each person resident in the State, including a person with a disability or who has other special educational needs, support services and a level and quality of education appropriate to meeting the needs and abilities of that person. [Education Act 1998, Part I, Section 7(1) (a)]

It is clear from the above that there are implications for boards of management and trustees/ patrons in certain key areas of policy development.

The requirement of section 15 (2) (c), Part IV of the Education Act that boards of management consult with and keep the patron informed of decisions of the board allows the patron to seek a report from the board of management in relation to its decisions.

Part IV, section 19 allows the patron to seek a report on the board of management in the event of concern about the discharging of the duties of the board.

Policies and Communication: Role of Trustees/Patrons and Board of Management

Implication: To enable trustees fulfil their responsibilities under legislation, trustees/patrons shall receive from the board of management of the school all relevant policies, information and documentation including:

Policy:	Provide to:
<i>Admissions Policy</i>	<i>Trustee/Patron for approval</i>
<i>The School Plan (In a DEIS school the DEIS plan is the school plan)</i>	<i>Trustee/Patron</i>
<i>Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment</i>	<i>Trustee/Patron</i>
<i>The notice of the annual review of the Child Safeguarding Statement</i>	<i>Trustee/Patron</i>
<i>Code of Discipline/Behaviour</i>	<i>Trustee/Patron on request</i>
<i>Anti-Bullying Policy</i>	<i>Trustee/Patron on request</i>
<i>Annual Review of Anti Bullying Policy and Implementation</i>	<i>Trustee/Patron & DE on request</i>
<i>The annual SSE report and School Improvement Plan (SIP)</i>	<i>Trustee/Patron on request</i>

Finance Matters

Keeping of accounts and records

(1) Except in the case of a school established or maintained by a vocational education committee, a board shall keep all proper and usual accounts and records of all monies received by it or expenditure of such monies incurred by it and shall ensure that in each year all such accounts are properly audited or certified in accordance with best accounting practice.

(2) Accounts kept in pursuance of this section shall be made available by the school concerned for inspection by the Minister and by parents of students in the school, in so far as those accounts relate to monies provided in accordance with section 12.

A copy of the annual certified school accounts forwarded to the FSSU should be sent to the trustees/patrons.

Data Protection Matters

As the trustees/patrons will be in receipt of board meeting minutes, on receipt of such minutes the trustees/patrons are responsible for maintaining confidentiality and protecting the personal data included in the minutes.

The board of management is the Data Controller and must manage all personal data appropriately particularly around the issue of sharing personal data and must certainly be conscious of the possibility of a data breach. The six permitted legal bases for sharing personal data are:

- a) You have the consent of the individuals concerned.
- b) It is necessary to fulfil the terms of the employment contract.
- c) It is necessary so that the school can fulfil a legal obligation.
- d) It is necessary to protect a vital interest of the individuals in question.
- e) It is necessary in order to perform a task carried out in the public interest.
- f) It is necessary for the purposes of the legitimate interests of the school/BOM, where such interests are not overriding the rights to privacy of the staff, or particularly the students.

Protected Disclosures

Each patron body will have its own Protected Disclosure Policy. In the event the joint trustees/patrons receive a protected disclosure it should be addressed.

Personnel Matters

The role of the trustees/patrons in the appointment of the members of the Selection Committee is outlined in the 2nd Schedule, Articles of Management, article 7 A (c) (ii), Deed of Trust, which refers to a Selection Committee of five persons constituted from time to time and comprising two representatives of the religious authorities involved in the operation of the school, a representative of the Education and Training Board, the Chief Executive of the Education and Training Board (ETB) or his/her nominee and an Inspector of the DE nominated by the Minister.

Article 7 A (c) (vi) of the Articles of Management, Deed of Trust, refers to the fact that in the event of the Minister introducing a scheme for the re-deployment of teachers who may become redundant in a comprehensive or community school, such a decision would require the agreement of the trustees/patrons.

Article 7 B of the Articles of Management, Deed of Trust, gives a guarantee to the religious trustees/patrons of reserved places for qualified teachers who are members of their religious congregation(s).

Notes:

1. The trustees/patrons are entitled to nominate representatives to serve on the Teacher Selection Committees for appointment to teaching positions, including principal and deputy principal. Two nominees of the Religious patron(s)/ Educate Together, one nominee of the ETB, The Chief Executive of the ETB or his/her nominee, one independent educationalist (appointed by the board of management).
2. 2014: Change to the composition of selection committees, “an Inspector of the DE nominated by the Minister” replaced with arrangements outlined in DE letter of 2014. *See Appendix 5.*
3. 2011: Cross sectoral redeployment scheme– reference Appendix 2 of CL 25/2011. *A school in a surplus teacher situation is obliged to make a return to the Director of the Redeployment Scheme, identifying the teacher(s) to be redeployed in line with the procedures set out in the circular. CL 25/2011.*

continued

4. 2014: Appointment of Chaplain:

The School Chaplain is appointed by the board of management in accordance with procedures outlined for the appointment of a teacher subject to equivalent terms and conditions of appointment. A Contract of Indefinite Duration (CID) is conferred on the Chaplain following the standard probationary year as for a permanent teaching post. The Chaplain is appointed in addition to the school allocation of whole-time teacher equivalents and is paid a teacher's salary by the Department of Education. Following discussions at the Teachers' Conciliation Conference the Selection Committee as set out in the panel below has been agreed. All newly appointed chaplains from September 2014 are subject to the duties and contract as approved by the TCC. These contracts are offered on a permanent basis. Any existing chaplain who opts to change from his/her existing contract to this permanent contract may do so; in which case the new duties will apply.

Implication: *It is important for trustees to ensure that their nominees on Selection Committees have appropriate skills and experience for their role on Selection Committees.*

The board should ensure the trustees have furnished or have been requested to furnish the names of representatives who will be available to serve on the teacher selection committees. See Sample letter(s) - Appendix 1

The trustees must be notified of the retirement / resignation of the principal/DP and that the process to appoint a replacement will commence. See Sample letter(s) - Appendix 1

The trustees should be duly informed of the outcome of the appointment process for principal and deputy principal and should be aware of the Senior Management team at the school. See Sample letter (s) - Appendix 1

Composition of Selection Panels for Interviews in Community Schools:

*Teaching Staff: 5 persons
(include appointments to director AE, DP & principal positions)*

Community Schools: Two Religious/Educate Together nominees, One ETB, CE, Educationalist

*(For appointments for periods of 24 weeks or more.
< 24 weeks – recommended but not compulsory.)*

*Chaplain: 5 persons
(When appointing a Chaplain, contact ACCS)*

Two Religious/Educate Together nominees
Two ETB representatives who shall be:
• One CE or his/her nominee
• One ETB board member

One educational expert. (The educational expert to be agreed between the trustees/patrons’ representatives)

Special Needs Assistant: 3 persons

Chairperson BOM
School principal
One other person nominated by the patron

Posts of Responsibility (including Programme Coordinator): 3 persons

CL 003/18:

- Agreed trustees/patrons' nominee
- An independent member drawn from a panel agreed between management and the unions
- The school principal who may not act as Chairperson

Principal/Deputy Principal (In Community Schools which are under the joint patronage of the local ETB and of the Catholic Religious Order(s) or other patron): 5 persons

- 2 Nominees of the Religious/Educate Together trustees/patrons or other patron
- Nominee of the ETB
- The Chief Executive of the ETB or her/his personal nominee
- Agreed Independent "Educationalist" a person with appropriate educational experience

The quorum is 3 but must include the Independent Educationalist.

Checklist for Trustees/Patrons

Trustees/Patrons: Action required

The following list is provided as a summary of the tasks required of trustees/patrons in discharging their duties. It is understood that trustees/patrons will consult with the board of management and establish guidelines which will assist them to carry out their official responsibilities to the school.

1. A significant role for the trustees/patrons is identified which necessitates the establishment of a National Trustee Forum which will have as some of its functions to co-ordinate the views of the trustees/patrons' interests and communicate with the DE. With joint and multi-trusteeship/patronage and the necessity for exchanging information and the implications of same, the need for a National Trustee Forum is clear. (See the establishment of AJP)
2. Joint trustees/patrons have a shared responsibility in a number of areas. ACCS recommends that joint trustees/patrons for a particular school should agree a liaison Trustee/Patron nominee who will liaise with the board of management and others, on their behalf during the course of the lifetime of the board of management.
3. The nominating trustee/patrons' organisation should make provision for the adequate preparation and training of their nominees to the board of management and help to make them aware of their responsibilities to their nominating authority. Trustee/patrons' organisations may seek feedback and accountability from their board nominees on the work of the school. Nominees to the board of management must be encouraged by their nominating authority to participate in any organised in-service training programmes provided by ACCS or other appropriate agencies as deemed necessary and appropriate.
4. Trustees/patrons organisations must ensure that their nominees to the school Selection Committee have the appropriate experience and training required for the responsibilities involved in their important work on the Selection Committee.
5. It is essential that trustee/patron' organisations involved in a community school ensure that any transfer of ownership and title to the school site be properly registered and compliant with relevant legislative requirements.

It is also necessary for trustees/patrons to be available for consultation with the board of management on any change of use of the school and on proposed alterations to the buildings or school site. DE sanction would also be required for any change of use or alterations to existing school accommodation/land. *See Appendix 2*

6. Trustees/patrons should communicate with their trustees/patrons' nominees to ensure their nominees in a community school are aware of their responsibilities.
7. Article 7 of the Model lease must be adhered to by the trustees/patrons' organisations where it is impracticable for a community school to continue to function.
8. The trustees/patrons, having secured all nominees to the board of management, duly appoint the board of management to assume its responsibilities for its term of office. This may be executed by the issuing of a formal letter appointing the nominees to the board of management. *See Appendix 1*
9. Trustees/patrons should keep up to date with developments in education and review the implications and responsibilities for them as encompassed by the Deed of Trust and Education Legislation.
10. The board of management is accountable to the trustees/patrons for upholding the characteristic spirit of the school. The board of management must receive from the trustees/patrons a statement of the founding purpose of the school and their educational philosophy. These documents will underpin the future development of the school. *See Appendix 3*
11. Trustees/patrons wishing to withdraw from its community school trusteeship/patronage should comply with the relevant section of the Deed of Trust and communicate their intention to (a) the other joint trustees/patrons (b) the DE (c) the board of management and (d) the national trustee forum (AJP).
12. The assistance of the Planning Unit within the DE should be utilised by the trustees/patrons for the setting up of the initial meeting of the board of management, especially where it is an initial meeting of the board of a school which include newly amalgamated schools. The trustees/patrons facilitate the appointment of the nominees to the board of management thereafter, following the completion of the term of office of a board of management.

Checklist of Responsibilities of the Board of Management to the Trustees/Patrons:

Board of Management: Action required

1. To be accountable to the trustees/patrons for upholding the 'characteristic spirit of the school'. *See Appendix 3*
2. To keep the trustees/patrons' representatives/organisations informed on any development(s) arising that impact on the management and life of the school.
3. To use the official reporting mechanism for all mandatory communication with the trustees/patrons arising out of school planning, board of management decisions, relevant trustee/patron' functions etc.
4. To ensure that the board of management communicates at regular intervals with its trustees/patrons on issues of mutual concern. trustees/patrons should receive a copy of the minutes of the board of management meeting after these have been formally adopted by the board of management.
5. To seek the approval of the trustees/patrons for any proposed capital acquisition, change of use of the school or disposal of assets recommended by the board. *See Appendix 1*
6. To inform the trustees/patrons when the life span of a particular board of management is close to termination (3 years) and to seek nominees to a new board of management. *See Appendix 1*
7. To ensure that trustees/patrons' nominees on their appointment to the board of management receive copies of (i) Deed of Trust/Deed of Indenture/Articles & Instruments of Management pertaining to the particular school (Community/Comprehensive) (ii) TAGAIRT (published by ACCS) (iii) Code and Password to access the ACCS website (iv) Agreements with staff Trade Unions (v) Education Act 1998 and such other legislation/documents that may be relevant.
8. To advise trustees/patrons nominee(s) on any in-service provision that may be of interest and value to trustees/patrons' interests.
9. To formally adopt all school policies in accordance with legislative requirements.

AJP/ACCS Editorial Team Membership:

The work of the members of the Association of Joint Patrons of Community and Comprehensive Schools and ACCS personnel engaged in the revision of the guidelines first published in 2004 is very much appreciated.

Appendix 1 Template Letter(s): Appointment of Board of Management by Trustees/
Patrons & Selection Committee Matters*A. Template letter to Trustees/Patrons **requesting nominees to Board of Management and nominees to Selection Committees***

Anywhere Community School
Co. Anywhere

Dear TRUSTEES/PATRONS,

I wish to advise that the current board of management of Anywhere Community School completes its three-year term on 31st July 20**.

I would be grateful if you could consider and advise regarding your three nominees to the incoming board.

I would also be pleased to receive your nominees for service on the Selection Committee interview panels for teaching appointments and promotional posts. All members of the interview panels are advised to complete the required training for service on selection committees.

Yours sincerely,

Secretary, Chairperson,
Board of Management

B. Template letter to informing Trustees/Patrons of *Composition of New Board and Request to Appoint the Board.*

Anywhere Community School
Co. Anywhere

Dear TRUSTEES/PATRONS,

I wish to acknowledge receipt of and thank you for your nominees to the incoming board of management. Please find details of the board commencing 1st August 20**:

	Religious /Educate Together Nominee
	Religious /Educate Together Nominee
	Religious /Educate Together Nominee
	ETB Nominee
	ETB Nominee
	ETB Nominee
	Teacher Nominee
	Teacher Nominee
	Parent Nominee
	Parent Nominee

On behalf of the board, I am now seeking confirmation of the appointment of the above nominees to the board of management by the joint trustees/patrons. This confirmation of the appointment of the nominees to the board can be in attendance at a meeting of the board or in writing.

The first meeting of the board is scheduled for ***day, *th August. The board would be delighted to welcome you to this meeting if your schedule permits.

I look forward to hearing from you and thank you for your continued support of our school.

Yours sincerely,

Secretary, Board of Management

May 20**

*C. Template letter to informing **Chairperson of the Board of Management of joint patron approval of the new Board.***

Anywhere Community School
Co. Anywhere

Dear Chairperson,

This letter acknowledges appointment of the nominees to the incoming board of management of **** Community School commencing 1st August 20** as set out below by the joint patrons XXX & XXX.

	Religious /Educate Together Nominee
	Religious /Educate Together Nominee
	Religious /Educate Together Nominee
	ETB Nominee
	ETB Nominee
	ETB Nominee
	Teacher Nominee
	Teacher Nominee
	Parent Nominee
	Parent Nominee

Thank you for the invitation to attend the first board meeting scheduled for ***day, *th August.

I would be delighted to attend

Unfortunately, I am unable to attend

Signed: _____ Joint Trustees/Patrons

Date: _____

Signed: _____ Joint Trustees/Patrons

Date: _____

D. Template **Form of Appointment Confirming Appointment of Nominees to the Board**

Form of Appointment

The joint patrons of Anywhere Community School hereby confirm the appointment of the following listed nominees to the board of management to serve from 1st August 20** to 31st July 20**:

	Religious /Educate Together Nominee
	Religious /Educate Together Nominee
	Religious /Educate Together Nominee
	ETB Nominee
	ETB Nominee
	ETB Nominee
	Teacher Nominee
	Teacher Nominee
	Parent Nominee
	Parent Nominee

Signed: _____ Joint Trustees/Patrons

Date: _____

Signed: _____ Joint Trustees/Patrons

Date: _____

E. Template confirming Trustees/Patrons' Nominees for Service on Selection Committee Interview Panels for Teaching Appointments and Promotional Posts including post of Principal/Deputy Principal from 1st August 20 to 31st July 20**:** (template list)

Name:	Tel Number:	Email Address:
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		

Signed: _____ Joint Trustees/Patrons

Date: _____

Signed: _____ Joint Trustees/Patrons

Date: _____

F. *Template letter informing Trustees/Patrons of **Resignation of the Principal/Deputy Principal***

Anywhere Community School
Co. Anywhere

Dear TRUSTEES/PATRONS,

On behalf of the board of management of ***** School, I have been directed by the board of management to notify you that the principal/deputy principal has submitted notice indicating his/her intention to retire/resign as and from xxxxxx (date).

The board of management has met and agreed the commencement of the appointment process. The new appointment is from xxxxxx (date).

Yours sincerely,

Secretary/Chairperson
Board of Management

G. Template letter informing Trustees/Patrons advising of **Appointment of the Principal/Deputy Principal**

Anywhere Community School
Co. Anywhere

Dear TRUSTEES/PATRONS,

I wish to advise that following the completion of the selection process, the board of management, at the meeting of *th *****, approved the appointment of Mr/Ms/Mrs ***** as PRINCIPAL/DEPUTY PRINCIPAL effective from *****.

The Board wishes ***** well in his/her role.

Yours sincerely,

Secretary/Chairperson
Board of Management

H. Template letter (CE, ETB), requesting , Trustees/Patrons, Representatives for Service on Interview Panel for Principal/Deputy Principal

Anywhere Community School
Co. Anywhere

Dear TRUSTEES/PATRONS (CE,ETB),

I would be grateful if you could provide a nominee of the ETB and if you or your nominee would be available for service on the Selection Committee, including shortlisting, for the appointment of principal/deputy principal. All members of the Selection Committee are advised to complete the necessary training.

The closing date for receipt of applications is the *****. Shortlisting is scheduled for the week of ***** and it is hoped to conduct the interviews the week of *****.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Secretary/Chairperson
Board of Management

*I. Template letter (Religious, Educate Together) requesting **Trustees/Patrons, Representatives for Service on Interview Panel for Principal/Deputy Principal***

Anywhere Community School
Co. Anywhere

Dear TRUSTEES/PATRONS (Religious, Educate Together),

I would be grateful if you could confirm two nominees for service on the Selection Committee, including shortlisting, for the appointment of principal/deputy principal. All members of the Selection Committee are advised to complete the necessary training.

The closing date for receipt of applications is the *****. Shortlisting is scheduled for the week of ***** and it is hoped to conduct the Interviews on the week of *****.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Secretary/Chairperson
Board of Management

Appendix 2 Template Letter(s): Permission to make changes to site and building(s)

A. *Template letter requesting approval from the trustees/patrons to proceed with **application for funding for building project***

Anywhere Community School
Co. Anywhere

Dear TRUSTEES/PATRONS,

The Board of Management wish to make an application to the Department of Education & Skills for funding for additional accommodation/building project (Describe).

The Board requests your approval to proceed with this application and confirms that there is no financial exposure to the trustees/patrons. The Board welcomes your support for this development at the school.

Yours sincerely,

Secretary/Chairperson,
Board of Management

B. Application Form for Additional Accommodation for **Post Primary Schools Form ASA**

Declaration & Certification

We hereby apply for grant-aid for towards the additional school accommodation as described in Section 2: Application Details.

We are aware of and agreeable to the condition that if this application is successful and results in the provision of capital funding; that this funding must be secured legally.

In accordance with Section 15 of the Education Act 1998, we certify that this board of management has consulted with the trustees/patrons. We confirm that, where applicable:

- (i) *the application has the approval of the trustees/patrons*
- (ii) *the application has the support of the board of management*
- (iii) *the proposed project is to be carried out within the confines of the vested school area.*

We certify that all of the information given in this application is true and complete to the best of our knowledge and any material change in circumstances will be notified immediately to the School's Capital Appraisal Section of the Department of Education and Skills.

We understand and declare that this application is made subject to contract and does not constitute, form part of or give rise to an agreement or contract with the Minister for Education.

Chairperson's Name (block letters):

Chairperson, board of management of:

Roll Number:

Signed:

Date:

Principal's Name (block letters):

Principal of:

Roll Number:

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 3: Template Characteristic Spirit of a Community School under the joint patronage of Catholic and ETB patrons



Cumann
Chomhphátrúin
na Scoileanna
Pobail agus
Cuimsitheacha

Association of
Joint Patrons of
Community and
Comprehensive
Schools

Template Characteristic Spirit of a Community School under the joint patronage of Catholic and ETB patrons:

XX School Community school is a co-educational/all girls/all boys multi-denominational post-primary school under the joint patronage of XX Bishop and/or Religious Congregation and XX ETB.

Community Schools provide a comprehensive system of post-primary education open to all the children of the local community. An innovative approach to delivery of a wide-ranging curriculum contributes to the spiritual, moral, mental, physical and social well-being of students within their community. Community Schools may also provide for life-long learning within their local community through the provision of adult education programmes.

Our school was established under the Deed of Trust and opened on XX date. (*Schools should customise to make reference to how the school was established e.g. amalgamation, greenfield site*). The values of XX ETB as a multi-denominational State Body and the inherited traditions, Christian values and founding intentions of XX Bishop and/or Religious Congregation are enshrined in the characteristic spirit and in the life of our school and are respected and cherished.

The core values of XX Community School are care, respect, community, inclusion, equality, justice and fairness. These values combine to provide and support an atmosphere which is conducive to excellence in teaching and learning. We endeavour to assist each student to reach his/her full potential in a calm, caring and creative environment.

Our values are reflected in how we live as a school community. The unique and intrinsic value of each member of the school community is recognised and respected. All are treated equally, regardless of race, gender, religion/belief, age, family status, marital status, civil status, membership of the Traveller community, sexual orientation, ability, disability or socio-economic status. All students are given equal opportunity for enrolment, in line with the Education (Admissions to School) Act (2018) construed in accordance with section 3 of the Equal Status Act 2000. Once enrolled, our school (school XX) provide all our students with equal opportunities to engage with the curriculum, school life and the local community.

Our school (school XX) provides a safe physical and social environment that reinforces a sense of belonging to the school community and wider society. We strive to enable every student to realise their full potential regardless of any aspect of their identity, culture or background. Our school promotes a fully inclusive education which recognises the plurality of identities, beliefs and values held by students, parents and staff. We prepare open-minded and responsible citizens with a strong sense of shared values with a view to contributing to a just and fairer society.

Our school is multi-denominational where we welcome, respect and support students of all religions and beliefs. The provision of religious education, religious worship and the work of the Chaplain all combine to reflect the founding intention of the school, the school's mission statement and the needs of the students within the school. The characteristic spirit of the school finds practical expression through the provision of pastoral, liturgical and social outreach activities, as appropriate, for each student.

In (School XX), we celebrate the partnership, collaboration and empathy which nurtures and develops our young people in a community where the essence of our ethos is care and respect for self, others, and our environment.

Appendix 3a: Ethos Statement for Inclusion in Admissions Policy of a Community School under the joint patronage of Educate Together and ETB patrons.

Celbridge Community School: *This statement has been agreed between Educate Together and Kildare Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB).*

Celbridge Community School is a community school recognised by the Department of Education (DE). It is multi-denominational and co-educational and Educate Together and Kildare Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB) are its joint patrons. As such, it operates within the regulations laid down by the Department of Education and Skills and follows the curricular programmes prescribed.

We are committed to the inclusive and equality-based values laid down in the Educate Together Charter and Mission Statement, and the KWETB core values of excellence in education, care, equality, community and respect.

Celbridge Community School is learner-centred, equality-based and democratically run. This means that all members of the school community, whatever their social, cultural or belief background, work together in an atmosphere of dignity and respect.

Our vision is for an equality-based model of second-level school; one that places the student at its centre and is run as a participatory democracy, with respectful partnership between parents, students, staff and school management. We aim to create a vibrant, welcoming school community with positive teacher-student relationships, in which every student feels a real sense of belonging. Each student is encouraged to explore their full range of abilities and supported to reach their full academic and social potential, whatever their background and identity.

Our multi-denominational and equality-based ethos provides a strong moral, ethical and spiritual framework for the whole school community that informs teaching and learning and all policies and practices in the daily life of the school.

Students follow an Ethical Education curriculum, which includes learning about different religions and belief systems, equality and justice issues and an ethical approach to the environment. In line with our ethical and democratic ethos, our school is committed to embedding and modeling sustainable and eco-friendly practices.

Celbridge Community School aims to provide an education that will enable all students to contribute meaningfully to their communities, embrace the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society and develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to live, learn and work in the 21st century.

Ballymakenny College: *This statement was agreed between Educate Together and Louth Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB)*

Ballymakenny College is a community school recognised by the Department of Education (DE). It is multi-denominational and co-educational and Educate Together and Louth Meath Education and Training Board are its joint patrons. As such, it operates within the regulations laid down by the Department of Education and Skills and follows the curricular programmes prescribed.

We are committed to the inclusive and equality-based values laid down in the Educate Together Charter and Mission Statement, and the Louth Meath ETB core values of excellence in education, care, equality, community and respect.

Ballymakenny College is learner-centred, equality-based and democratically run. This means that all members of the school community, whatever their social, cultural or belief background, work together in an atmosphere of dignity and respect.

Our vision is for an equality-based model of second-level school; one that places the student at its centre and is run as a participatory democracy, with respectful partnership between parents, students, staff and school management.

We aim to create a vibrant, welcoming school community with positive teacher-student relationships, in which every student feels a real sense of belonging. Each student is encouraged to explore their full range of abilities and supported to reach their full academic and social potential, whatever their background and identity.

Our equality-based and multi-denominational ethos provides a strong moral, ethical and spiritual framework for the whole school community that informs teaching and learning and all policies and practices in the daily life of the school.

Students follow an ethical education curriculum, which includes learning about different religions and belief systems, equality and justice issues and an ethical approach to the environment. In line with our equality-based, ethical and democratic ethos, our school is committed to embedding and modeling sustainable and eco-friendly practices

Ballymakenny College aims to provide an education that will enable all students to contribute meaningfully to their communities, embrace the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society and develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to live, learn and work in the 21st century.

Appendix 4: Template End of Year Report for Trustees/Patrons**Table of Contents**

Contact Details

Characteristic Spirit Statement

School Mission Statement

Brief History of School

School Location, Catchment Area – *Map if relevant included at Appendix 1*

Board of Management (Term: 20XX – 20YY)

School Personnel

School Policies

Parents' Association/Council Report

Student Council Report

Student Profile

School Enrolments

School Self-Evaluation Reports:

Curriculum and Extracurricular Activities

School Accommodation/Facilities

School Finance

Opportunities and Challenges

Appendix 5: DE Letter re change of policy on selection committees

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
 Corr na Madadh
 Baile Átha Luain
 Co. na hIarmhí



Department of Education and Skills
 Cornamaddy
 Athlone
 Co. Westmeath

Mr. Ciaran Flynn
 General Secretary
 ACCS,
 10H Centrepoint Business Park,
 Oak Drive,
 Dublin 12

6 June 2014

Selection Boards for the Appointment and promotion of teachers in Community and Comprehensive Schools.

Dear Ciaran

I am writing to confirm again the policy change whereby wherever the involvement of a Department Inspector in teacher selection boards was required there is no longer such a requirement.

The Inspector essentially discharged a role of education expert external to or independent from the school. While the Inspectorate are no longer fulfilling that role Community and Comprehensive schools should make their own arrangements to secure a person to fill the position of Education Expert where such is required on a selection board.

This letter from the Department should also be taken to supersede any circulars, letters or other documents that refer to a requirement to have a person from the Inspectorate on selection boards.

Yours sincerely

Martin Hanevy
 Assistant Secretary

Appendix 6: Trustees/patrons' Interests at National Level

The Minister for Education is required by the Education Act to consult with various stakeholders, including patrons, in the education system. The Act it is stated that:

The Minister shall make all reasonable efforts to consult with patrons, national associations of parents, parents' associations in schools, recognised school management organisations, recognised trade unions and staff associations representing teachers and such other persons who have a special interest in or knowledge of matters relating to education, including persons or groups of persons who have a special interest in, or experience of, the education of students with special educational needs, as the Minister considers appropriate. [Education Act 1998, Part I, Section 7(4) (b)]

The process of consulting with patrons, among others, is referred to in other sections of the Act, including:

Section 6(g)	Special needs
Section 23(1)	The procedures for appointment of principals.
Section 25	The length of the school year, week, day
Section 30 (1)	Curriculum
Section 32 (1)	Educational disadvantage
Section 33	Regulations for the purpose of giving effect to the Act

Consultation with trustees/patrons is also referred to in the Section of the Act relating to the Inspectorate:

An Inspector, including the Chief Inspector, shall carry out his or her functions in accordance with such procedures as may be determined by the Minister from time to time, following consultation with patrons, school management organisations, recognised trade unions, and staff associations representing teachers and such other persons as the Minister considers appropriate, and such directions as may be given by the Minister from time to time.

[Education Act 1998, Part III, Section 13(8)]

Part III, Section 13 (3)(a)(i) of the Education Act refers to the function of the Inspector to:

Visit recognised schools and centres for education on the initiative of the Inspectorate, and, following consultation with the board, patrons, parents of students and teachers, as appropriate.

The original guidelines written in 2004 proposed that a structure be established whereby trustees/patrons could be consulted on a national level. Since the Education Act clearly states that the trustees/patrons are to be consulted on a wide range of issues it recommended that a National Trustees/Patrons Forum be established to enable the views of trustees/patrons in Community Schools to be articulated and communicated to the DE and other agencies. Details regarding the functions, composition and representative make-up of the National trustees/patrons Forum were finalised following consultation with the appropriate nominating trustees/patrons agencies. ACCS had a secretarial role in convening the National Trustee Forum.

The Guidelines of 2004 also recommended that the DE make available to the National Trustees Forum a copy of its register of trustees/patrons database to assist the Forum in executing its responsibilities to its membership.

The National Trustee Forum:

The Inaugural Meeting of the ACCS National Trustee Forum was held in the ACCS offices at 10H Centrepoint, Dublin 12 on July 30th, 2007, and Monsignor Jim Cassin, Episcopal Commission was appointed Chairperson of the group. This meeting endorsed the importance of trusteeship as enshrined in the Deed of Trust and highlighted the need to develop this educational partnership more fully.

The ACCS booklet “Guidelines on the Role of Trustees in Community and Comprehensive Schools” was acknowledged as very important to trustees in the sector and that much of the work of the NTF would be to ensure that all trustees would be made aware of the contents. Dissemination of best practice in relation to trusteeship would be a vital part of the work of the NTF.

(Extract from the minutes of the meeting 2007)

The first national conference of the NTF was held on May 13th, 2008, in the Mullingar Park Hotel.

The Association of Joint Patrons (AJP):

In 2019 the NTF was replaced by the Association of Joint Patrons of Community and Comprehensive Schools, (AJPCCS) shortened to the Association of Joint Patrons (AJP). In February 2019 at its first AGM, in the Mullingar Park Hotel, the Constitution of this new Association was adopted.

The main object for which the body is established is to address the concerns of trustees/patrons and to promote best operational practice in the exercise of patronage/trusteeship in Community and Comprehensive Schools.

Other objects include:

- a) To develop coherence in the exercise of joint patronage, or where relevant single patronage, of Community and Comprehensive Schools in Ireland.
- b) To provide a means by which joint patrons can be consulted and supported at national level.
- c) To enable the views of joint patrons to be articulated and communicated to the Department of Education and Skills and other relevant agencies.

The trustees/patrons of Community and Comprehensive Schools are represented on the AJP by the following organisations:

Association of Patrons and Trustees of Catholic Schools (APTCS):

Catholic patrons of Community Schools are invited to join the Association of Patrons and Trustees of Catholic Schools (APTCS). APTCS recognises the multi-denominational, joint patronage character of community schools and supports the patrons in exercising its functions in this context.

APTCS has a particular role in assisting religious patrons in working together with the joint patron to determine, support and develop the characteristic spirit of the school taking account of the founding intentions and heritage of the school.

The Irish Episcopal Conference:

The Irish Episcopal Conference is a body where Catholic Bishops in Ireland exercise together certain pastoral offices for Christ's faithful on the whole island of Ireland. The IEC in itself is not a patron body but all of its members are patrons of schools within their individual dioceses. Each Bishop exercises the role of patron within their individual dioceses.

To help it fulfil its aims more effectively, the IEC has established various Episcopal Commissions, including Catholic Education and Formation. The Council for Education comes under the Episcopal Commission for Catholic Education and Formation and articulates policy and vision for Catholic Education in Ireland, North and South, on behalf of the Episcopal Conference. It has responsibility for the forward planning necessary to ensure the best provision for Catholic Education in the country.

Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI):

Education & Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) is the national representative association for its sixteen-member Education & Training Boards (ETBs) and negotiates on behalf of the ETB sector at various forums within the education sector at national and international levels. Its mission is to lead and advance the continued development of education, training and youthwork in Ireland. ETBI is guided by the core values of excellence, care, equality, community, and respect. ETBI is not a patron body. However, Chief Executives of its member ETBs exercise the role of patron/trustee within their ETBs.

ETBs are the largest provider of state, co-educational, multi-denominational education in Ireland. As ETBs are public bodies, the ‘state’ schools under their remit have particular responsibilities in respect of the ‘common good’ in an increasingly diverse society. In line with these obligations, ETBs provide ‘co-educational’ education that includes the full diversity of gender identities in the community. ETBs also provide ‘multi-denominational’ education meaning that students of all religions and beliefs are treated equally. Therefore, the school environment and activities do not privilege any particular group over another whilst at the same time acknowledging and facilitating students of all religions and beliefs.

General Synod of Education of the Church of Ireland:

The General Synod of Education of the Church of Ireland represents the patron interest of the Church of Ireland in five Comprehensive Schools, Ashton School, East Glendalough, Mount Temple, Newpark Comprehensive and the Royal and Prior.

Educate Together:

Educate Together is a school patron and an educational charity whose activities are regulated by its Constitution and the Companies and Charities Acts. It has its roots in the Dalkey School Project National School, which was founded in 1978. Educate Together is a membership organisation with more than 100 primary and post-primary schools in its membership nationally. In 2014 Educate Together and Meath Louth ETB opened Ballymakenny College. Celbridge Community School opened in 2015 with the joint patronage of Educate Together and Kildare Wicklow ETB.



For further information contact:

Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools

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CHY Number: 8692